

ASSAULT ON JOURNOS, STUDENTS DU expels four JCD men

DU CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka University (DU) authorities yesterday temporarily expelled four students who brutally assaulted three journalists and at least 10 students of Mass Communication and Journalism (MCJ) department on Friday.

They are the leaders and activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), student wing of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP).

The expelled students are: Aminur Islam Amin, a third year Anthropology students also the president of AF Rahman Hall JCD unit, Shishir, a second year student of History, Saiful Islam, a 2nd year student of Sociology, and Belayet Hossain, a master's student of Drama and Music department.

The decision was taken at a syndicate meeting with Vice Chancellor Prof SMA Faiz in the chair.

Meanwhile, JCD relieved its hall unit leader Amin of the organisational activities permanently and also expelled two activists Shishir and Belayet as part of its disciplinary steps, says a press release signed by Omar Faruk Shafin.

The meeting also formed a five-member committee with Arts Faculty Dean Prof Sadrul Amin as its convener to probe into the incident of beating up journalists and students by JCD men.

The committee has been asked to submit its report within three weeks.

Prof Faiz said the committee will also investigate the allegation of demanding toll from the contractor and engineer of a five-story residential building at Jagannath Hall by Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) leaders and activists.

Prof Faiz said as per the decision, they would not be able to sit for the examinations until the committee submits its final report to the authorities.

Meanwhile, teachers and students of MCJ department demanded exemplary punishment to the JCD cadres who assaulted its students.

A group of JCD men of Sir AF Rahman Hall brutally assaulted three reporters and some MCJ students near TSC intersection in the early hours of Friday with iron rods, wood sticks, cricket stumps and machetes.

Students and teachers of MCJ department took out a silent procession that paraded through different streets on the campus and held a rally at the foot of Aparajeyo Bangla to realise their demand.

Chairman of the department Prof Sheikh Abdus Salam, former chairman Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique, associate profs Mafizur Rahman and Robayet Ferdous, Dr Kaberi Gayen participated in the programme.

Students demanded permanent expulsion of the CD men from the university and vowed to forge a tough movement at the university if their demands go unheeded.

They also submitted a memorandum to the VC in support of their demands.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Chhatra Union, Bangladesh Chhatra Federation and Samajtantrik Chhatra Front condemned the attack on journalists and students of MCJ department by the JCD cadres.

Call for new int'l arms trade treaty

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a press conference yesterday urged the government to play an active role in securing an international arms trade treaty aiming to curb supply of weapons.

The treaty will be debated at the United Nations General Assembly in October for its adoption. In 2006, 153 governments voted overwhelmingly at the UN to develop the treaty to control irresponsible global arms trade as the existing treaty has many loopholes.

Bangladesh Development Partnership Centre (BDPC) and Bangladesh Network on Small Arms (BANSA) jointly organised the press conference at the National Press Club in the city as part of the Week of Action on campaign for the treaty being observed across the globe from September 13 to 19.

BDPC Director Sharif A Kafi said that vested quarters are engaged in illegal arms trade due to existing lax treaty. The new treaty, if adopted at the UN, will help curb the supply of illegal weapons, he added.

The treaty will also ensure transparency and accountability in production, supply and use of arms, he said.

During the Week of Action, the organisations will form a human chain and held a rally in the capital on September 16, in Jessore on September 17, in Satkhira and Gazipur on September 18 to raise awareness about illegal arms trade.

BDPC Chairperson Masuda Farook, BANSA representative Atika Majumder and Sahara Begum of Women and Human Rights Foundation were present at the press conference.



Hundreds of vehicles get stuck in a gridlock at Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

Help ensure reproductive health rights

Speakers urge media

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers called on the media to play a vital role in ensuring sexual and reproductive health rights as it influences all sectors of the society starting from family life to the national life in the long run.

They said this at a discussion with journalists on 'Sexual and reproductive health and rights in Bangladesh' held at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

Reproductive Health Services Training and Education Programme (RHSTEP), an NGO, organised the event in support with Health and Environment Journalist Forum, Bangladesh (HEJFB).

ATN Bangla Head of News Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul was present at the programme as the lead discussant while senior journalist Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury was the moderator.

He suggested for formulating handbooks with compilation of the terminologies related to health sectors and contacts of the health authorities for easy understanding of the reporters.

HEJFB General Secretary Saiful

Islam Shamim underscored the need for long and proper training of the journalists on the issue.

He identified that lack of knowledge and poverty is responsible to lack of awareness of reproductive health, saying, "Media in Bangladesh works very subtly on the issue."

Presenting a keynote paper on the issue, RHSTEP Manager (Programme) Dr Luna Chakma said the number of maternal mortality in the country is 322 per one lakh live birth and 23 percent women giving birth before reaching 20.

Contraceptive prevalence rate for married women is 55.8 percent and 17.6 percent of the newly married women are still unmet with family planning facilities, she added.

RHSTEP Executive Director Quazi Suraiya Sultana said, "Awareness among our target group is not adequate. So, media can play the most effective role to make them aware on this sensitive issue."

To reduce maternal mortality and morbidity, RHSTEP is currently imparting menstrual regulation (MR) training, MR and family planning services through 13 medical college hospitals, eight Sadar and

general hospitals, one maternity clinic in Dhaka, seven community clinics, five satellite clinics and one vocational training centre.

President of the forum Mustafiz Shafi was in the chair.

SAUDI ROAD CRASH

Iftekhar condoles death of Bangladeshis

BSS, Dhaka

Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Welfare and Overseas Employment Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury yesterday expressed deep shock at the death of four Bangladeshis in a road accident in Saudi Arabia.

In a condolence message, he conveyed sympathy to the bereaved families and prayed for eternal peace of the departed souls.

The foreign adviser also directed Bangladesh mission in Saudi Arabia to arrange for sending the bodies of the victims to Bangladesh quickly.

Hold UZ polls before JS election

Demands Quarishi

BSS, Dhaka

Progressive Democratic Party (PDP) yesterday demanded holding of upazila elections before Jatiya Sangsad polls.

Addressing a press conference at the party office, PDP Chairman Dr Ferdous Ahmed Quarishi said the nation expects a free, fair and meaningful election from the Election Commission (EC). But it wants polls in 482 upazilas before the parliamentary elections.

PDP Secretary General Noor Mohammad Khan, Additional Secretary General Golam Sarwar Milon, Adviser Col (ret'd) Shafiqur Rahman, Joint Secretary General Major (ret'd) Parvez Kabir, Major (ret'd) Reazul Islam, Mosharraf Hossain Khan and Dr Amir Hossain.

Despite different adverse situations, Dr Quarishi said the countrymen have been giving massive support to the caretaker government.

He also demanded holding referendum on three national issues before the Jatiya Sangsad polls. The issues are balancing power between president and prime minister by amending constitution, giving scope to lawmakers for freedom of expression by amending article 70 of the constitution and holding trial of corruption cases quickly.

There is no alternative to referendum to maintain the achievements of 1/11 changeover to free the country from criminalised politics and rule, Dr Quarishi said and demanded that the government take urgent steps in this regard.

He said the EC had talked about various reforms, including recasting election system, creating level-playing field, holding election free from black money and corruption and staging upazila elections before the parliamentary polls, adding, but they are retreating from every stance.

PDP thinks that, Dr Quarishi said, there is still time for the EC to the firm in fulfilling its commitments. For this, he called for holding upazila elections before the JS polls.

He noted that understanding and rapprochement between the two big parties with the government is positive, adding that the two big parties had called PDP as "kings party", but now their parties have turned into "kings party".

BFUJ biennial council Oct 31, polls Nov 23

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The biennial council of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) will be held on October 31 and its Federal Executive Committee (FEC) polls will be held on November 23.

The decision was taken at an FEC meeting at the national press club in the city on Friday.

The meeting said the election commission will soon declare the election schedule.

BFUJ leaders at the meeting demanded that all dues and arrears be paid to the journalists, workers and employees according to the 7th Wage Board before the Eid.

They condemned the move to terminate the journalists and give contractual appointments in some newspaper houses in the name of financial constraints due to the wage board award.

The meeting demanded handing over the fund of Tk 20 lakh donated by former prime minister Sheikh Hasina to BFUJ account for the welfare of journalists.

The BFUJ also demanded trial of the killing of journalists and lifting of all kinds of barriers from trade unionism.

Presided over by BFUJ President Manjurul Ahsan Bulbul, the meeting was addressed by Vice President Chitta Ghosh, Secretary General Abdul Jalil Bhuiyan, Joint Secretary General Molla Jalal, Treasurer Faraji Azmol Hossain, Chittagong Union of Journalist President Mushtak Ahmed, Khulna Union of Journalist President Shaheb Ali and General Secretary SM Habib Bogra Union of Journalist President Pradip Shankar and Mahmudur Rahman Nayan, Rajshahi Union of Journalist President Akbarul Hasan Millat, Sultan Uddin Khan of Mymensingh Union of Journalist, Jessore Union of Journalist General Secretary Fahidul Islam, Dhaka Union of Journalist President Shah Alamgir and General Secretary Omar Faruk, FEC member Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, Jishu Roy, Abdul Mannan, Enamul Haque Bablu and Aslam Sani.



Primary and Mass Education Adviser Rasheda K Choudhury addresses a roundtable on 'Achieving MDG: Perspectives and need for a national ECCD policy' at IDB Bhaban in the city yesterday. On her left is Syed Manzoorul Islam and on her right are Musharraf Hossain Bhuiyan and Edward Ned Espey. Plan Bangladesh organised the event and Channel-I and Star Insight of The Daily Star were the media partners.

'Recover Khilgaon playground from Ansar VDP forces'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Residents of Khilgaon in the city yesterday demanded recovery of a playground from the grip of Ansar and VDP forces who took control of the land on January 31, 2007.

The demand was made at a press conference organised jointly by Khilgaon Welfare Society (KWS) and Save the Environment Movement (SEM) at the Dhaka Reporters Unity auditorium yesterday.

In a written statement Mohammad Hafizur Rahman Maina, general secretary of KWS, said as the local people protested the move, the Ansar and VDP men assaulted and filed false cases against them.

He said the land was allotted to

the Ansar to build a women's hostel there in 1987 by the then president Lt Gen (ret'd) HM Ershad but in the face of protests by the local people he declared that the land would be used as children's park.

In 1996, the then caretaker government of Justice Habibur Rahman also directed the officials concerned to make it a children's park cancelling the allotment to the Ansar.

The locals of the area will form a human chain to press home their demand on September 20.

KWS President Manir Hossain Khan, economist Anu Mohammad, singer Fakir Alamgir, SEM Chairman Abu Naser Khan, cricketer Rakibul Hasan, and former whip of the Jatiya Sangsad Abu Saeed Khan were present at the press conference.

Bangladesh-Thai art exhibition begins Sept 16

METRO DESK

To celebrate the 36th anniversary of Bangladesh-Thailand diplomatic relations, Royal Thai Embassy in Dhaka organises a three-day workshop on water-colour painting, which illustrates Thailand as seen by the Bangladeshi young artists as well as Bangladesh as seen by a renowned Thai artist, says a press release.

Following the workshop, there will be a joint art exhibition from September 16 to 27 at Drik Gallery in the city.

The workshop will begin today at Royal Thai Embassy and will also be held at the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh tomorrow and at an outdoor place in Narayanganj on September 15.

Bangladeshi students of age up to 25 years and currently enrolled in a university are invited to participate in this workshop.



Cricketer Rakibul Hasan speaks at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters' Unity auditorium in the city yesterday. On his left are Abu Naser Khan, economist Anu Mohammad, Mostafa Jamal Haider and Mohammad Hafizur Rahman.

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Participants at a press conference organised by Bangladesh Development Partnership Centre (BDPC) and Bangladesh Network on Small Arms (BANSA) at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.